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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR R - Dan Smith, WHA for Terry Breese, S/P for William McIlhenny

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [KMDR](#) [OIIP](#) [PREL](#) [CA](#)

SUBJECT: Dominion Institute Project on American Myths

1. This is an action message. Please see para 4.

2. On November 12, under an \$80,000 grant from the Canadian Donner Foundation, the Dominion Institute, the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute and the National Post jointly launched the first of a five-part series multi-media project called "American Myths: What Canadians Think They Know about the USA." The project includes an American Myths Television Series hosted by Dominion Institute Executive Director Rudyard Griffiths on the Canadian Learning Television channel, companion articles in the National Post, and a web page (<http://www.dominion.ca/americanmyths/index.html>) with access to polling and print components. A book and DVD on the series is planned.

3. The "American Myths" project schedule and issues include:

-- November 12: Peacekeeping. The premise that Canadians keep the peace and Americans fight wars is debated by University of Toronto political scientist Steven Clarkson and military historian Jack Granatstein. An article by Granatstein "Is America the World's Real Peacekeeper?" appears on the website and in the National Post.

-- November 14: Just Society. The U.S. pioneered the welfare state in the 1930s and National Post political columnist Andrew Coyne and Canadian activist Judy Rebick debate which country has evolved into the more just society. An article by David Frum "Is the USA the Just Society in North America" appears on the website and in the National Post.

-- November 15: Multiculturalism. U.S is called the melting pot and Canada is called the mosaic, but which country represents the truest multicultural experimenter in practice is examined by the Toronto Star editor emeritus Haroon Siddiqui and journalist and poet Clifton Joseph. Patrick Luciani has an article in the National Post entitled "Is America the True Multicultural Experiment?"

-- November 16: Democracy. National Post political columnist Andrew Coyne and pollster and political advisor Allan Gregg debate which nation has built a more responsive, effective and accountable democracy. "Is America the Real Democracy in North America" is the companion article.

-- November 17: Values. Author Linda McQuig and National Post culture columnist Robert Fulford pose the question whether Canada and the U.S. are far closer than Canadians would like to admit. "Are American Values Canadian Values" is the companion article.

Action Request

4. Action Request: Griffiths will be meeting with Ambassador Wilkins on November 18 to explain the "American Myths" project and present a DVD of the television series. On December 1-2, Griffiths will be in Washington to attend the Woodrow Wilson dinner in honor of Colin Powell. We request Department officials in R, WHA and S/P meet with him. The effort would support the Secretary's transformational diplomacy initiative and could serve as a model for use elsewhere.

Biography

5. Rudyard J.F. Griffiths, BA(H), MPHIL (CANTAB) is the founder and the executive director of the Dominion Institute - a national charity dedicated to the promotion of history and citizenship.

Under Rudyard's leadership the Dominion Institute has grown into a national organization with a full-time staff of ten and 1,600 volunteers across Canada. The Dominion Institute's principal activities are

organizing large-scale public dialogue campaigns on cultural issues, producing television documentaries, publishing books and operating free educational programs for teachers and community groups.

Rudyard is also an advisor to the Woodrow Wilson Center, assisting in the development of a new institute on Canada-US relations in Washington, D.C. Previously, Rudyard worked as policy analyst with the Department of Foreign Affairs in Ottawa and as communications assistant in the Office of Premier of Ontario. Rudyard is also the co-organizer of the Grano Lecture Series.

Educated in the Ontario public school system, Rudyard holds an honors Bachelor of Arts in history and Political Science from the University of Toronto and a Masters of Philosophy from Emmanuel College, Cambridge. He writes regularly on themes of Canadian history and identity for the Globe and Mail, National Post and Maclean's.

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